1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XX

● 343
841

Rough shelter built for isolation of women at Unuwatura Bubula

[facing p.94]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kukuls*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botus-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way,
231 we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched
[281 with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by
362] his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats.
231 Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like
[84] structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[171] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda, half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.